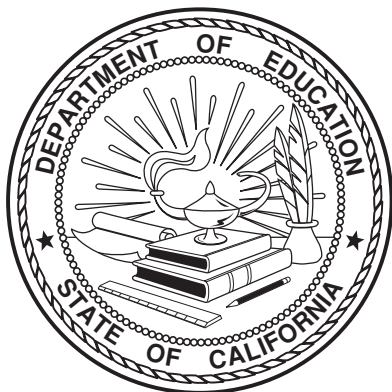

Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program



The STAR Student Report

Explaining 2005 Test Results to Parents and Guardians

Assistance for School Districts and Schools

August 2005

Prepared by the
California Department
of Education

Purpose

Educating students is a team effort. Parents and guardians, students, and schools benefit when there is a shared responsibility for learning. To fully participate as part of this team, parents and guardians should know the role the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program plays in ensuring that all students achieve California's content standards.

The *STAR Student Reports: Explaining 2005 Test Results to Parents and Guardians* is designed to help local staffs answer questions parents and guardians may have about the 2005 STAR Program and their students' results. Assistance provided includes general information about tests in the STAR Program, newsletter inserts, sample principal letters, and parent/guardian brochures. Spanish versions for most of the materials provided in English will be posted, when they are completed, on the California Department of Education (CDE) Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp>.

These materials are designed to be used in conjunction with the *STAR 2005: STAR Program Pretest Information for Parents and Guardians: Assistance Packet for School Districts and Schools*, posted in March 2005 on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp>.

The assistance materials published in March provide a full overview of the STAR Program with updated information about "What's New in 2005," questions and answers about the 2005 STAR Program, six articles for school/home newsletters, graphic displays of the STAR Program "at-a-

glance," sample letters for school district or site administrators, and a parent/guardian brochure. This August 2005 assistance packet completes the information provided in March with more details about the reporting process and additional articles for school/home newsletters, sample letters, and brochures.

Information in this new set of materials (August 2005) is divided into two parts as follows:

- Part A features information and material to assist school district and site administrators, teachers, and other staff members responsible for explaining STAR Program results to parents and guardians.
- Part B includes three brochures for parents and guardians and sample STAR student reports with explanatory notes.

At the beginning of Part A and Part B are introductions to the enclosed information and materials with some suggested uses.

The STAR Student Report

Explaining 2005 Test Results
to Parents and Guardians

Part A

Assistance for School
District and Site
Administrators,
Teachers, and Parent
Leaders

Table of Contents — Part A

1 Introduction to Part A

2 Section I – Communicating About the 2005 STAR Program

3 Overview of Key Components

4 Tests Taken by Students

6 Communicating About the *California Standards Tests (CSTs)*

11 Scale Score Ranges for CST Performance Levels

14 Section II – Communicating About the 2005 *California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA)*

15 Communicating About the *California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA)*

17 Scale Score Ranges for CAPA Performance Levels

18 Section III – Newsletter Inserts and Sample Letters

Sample School/Home Newsletter Inserts:

19 Spotlight on STAR 2005: How Are STAR Program Results
Used to Help Students? (Insert #Seven)

21 Spotlight on STAR 2005: How Are STAR Program Results Used
for School Accountability? (Insert #Eight)

School District or Site Administrator's

Sample Letters for STAR Student Reports:

23 Grades Two through Eight (*CSTs* and *CAT/6 Survey*)

25 Grades Nine, Ten, and Eleven

26 CAPA Version

27 SABE/2 Home Report

Introduction to Part A

The primary purpose of Part A is to assist school district and site administrators, teachers, and parent leaders responsible for informing parents and guardians about their students' 2005 STAR Program results. Assistance materials prepared for this purpose are included in the following three sections:

- **Section I — “Communicating about the 2005 STAR Program.”** This section provides an overview of the 2005 STAR Program, highlighting tests taken by students in the 2005 administration and spotlighting the *California Standards Tests (CSTs)*.
- **Section II — “Communicating about the California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA).”** This section provides an overview about the alternate assessment for students with significant cognitive disabilities who are unable to take the *CSTs* and in grades three and seven the *California Achievement Tests, Sixth Edition Survey (CAT/6 Survey)* with accommodations or modifications.
- **Section III — “Newsletter Inserts and Sample Letters.”** This section provides two sample school/home newsletter inserts that describe in reader-friendly language how STAR Program results are used for improving student achievement and for reporting school accountability. Also included are sample letters to parents and guardians that are designed to accompany STAR student reports when they are sent home. Spanish translations of the newsletter inserts and sample letters are forthcoming on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp>.

Suggested Uses for Assistance Materials

All of the information in sections I and II can be used in a variety of ways. For example, site administrators can use the chart showing STAR Program tests taken by students as a quick reference at staff, school site council, or parent/guardian meetings. More in-depth information about the *CSTs* and the *CAPA* can be used to respond to questions from participants at these meetings. Teachers also can keep this material ready for use at parent/guardian-teacher conferences. School district administrators may want to use information from Part A and Part B to speak with community leaders about the STAR Program and its results.

Part A: Section I

Communicating About the 2005 STAR Program

Overview of Key
Components

Tests Taken by Students

Communicating About
the *CSTs*

Scale Score Ranges for
CST Performance Levels

2005 STAR Program Overview of Key Components

For the eighth year, California public school students in grades two through eleven took part in the state's Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program. The STAR Program is designed primarily to help measure how well students are achieving the California content standards in English-language arts, mathematics, history-social science, and science. All students in grades two through eleven must participate in the STAR Program each spring, including students with disabilities and English learners.

The STAR Program for 2005 had four components:

- The *California Standards Tests (CSTs)* were developed for California public schools to assess state-adopted content standards.
- The *California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA)* was developed for California public school students with significant cognitive disabilities who are not able to take the CSTs and the *CAT/6 Survey* (for grades three and seven) even with accommodations or modifications.
- The *California Achievement Tests, Sixth Edition Survey (CAT/6 Survey)*, administered in grades three and seven only, are nationally norm-referenced tests that measure the achievement of general academic knowledge and provide national comparisons.

- The *Spanish Assessment of Basic Education, Second Edition (SABE/2)*, is a nationally norm-referenced achievement test of basic skills in Spanish for Spanish-speaking English learners.

A chart showing the STAR Program tests that students took in 2005, by subject area and grade level, is provided on page 4.

Individual student results for all components of the STAR Program arrive in most school districts in July and August. After these reports are received in each school district, they must be distributed to parents and guardians.

Group results for schools, school districts, counties, and the state are posted in August on the CDE Web site at <http://star.cde.ca.gov>.

2005 STAR Program Tests Taken by Students

Test	Grade									
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
California Standards Tests (CSTs)										
English-Language Arts	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mathematics	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓*	✓*	✓*	✓*
History-Social Science							✓		✓	✓
Science				✓				✓*	✓*	✓*
California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA)**										
English-Language Arts	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mathematics	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
California Achievement Tests, Sixth Edition Survey (CAT/6 Survey)										
Reading/Language		✓				✓				
Spelling		✓				✓				
Mathematics		✓				✓				
Spanish Assessment of Basic Education, Second Edition (SABE/2)***										
Reading/Language	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Spelling	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Mathematics	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Word Analysis	✓	✓								

✓ Tests required for all students taking the tests at this grade level.

* Tests based on course completion (see page 5).

** The CAPA is taken by students with significant cognitive disabilities who are not able to take the CSTs (and the CAT/6 Survey for grades three and seven) even with accommodations or modifications.

*** The SABE/2 must be taken by Spanish-speaking English learners who are enrolled in a California public school and who have attended a California public or nonpublic school less than 12 months. The SABE/2 is taken in addition to the CSTs and CAT/6 Survey (for grades three and seven).

CSTs Based on Course Completion

Mathematics CSTs for grades eight through eleven include:

■ *General Mathematics*

This test is only for students in grade eight and nine who are not enrolled in or completing standards-based mathematics courses designated for these grades.

■ *Algebra I*

■ *Geometry*

■ *Algebra II*

■ *Integrated Mathematics 1*

■ *Integrated Mathematics 2*

■ *Integrated Mathematics 3*

■ *Summative High School Mathematics*

This test is only for students in grades nine and ten who completed Algebra II or Integrated Mathematics 3 the previous school year and for students in grade eleven who completed Algebra II or Integrated Mathematics 3 before testing begins. This includes students taking a higher mathematics course or no mathematics course.

Science CSTs for grades nine through eleven include:

■ *Earth Science*

■ *Biology*

■ *Chemistry*

■ *Physics*

■ *Integrated/Coordinated Science 1*

■ *Integrated/Coordinated Science 2*

■ *Integrated/Coordinated Science 3*

■ *Integrated/Coordinated Science 4*

2005 STAR Program

Communicating About the California Standards Tests (CSTs)

What are the CSTs?

The *California Standards Tests*, or *CSTs*, are given to students in grades two through eleven as part of the state's Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program. The *CSTs* were developed exclusively for California's public schools. The purpose of the *CSTs* is to determine how well students are achieving state-adopted content standards. The content standards are statements that describe what students should know and be able to do at each grade level.

Who takes the CSTs?

All students who participate in the STAR Program take the *CSTs* and *CAT/6 Survey* (for grades three and seven) except for those with significant cognitive disabilities. Students with significant cognitive disabilities take the *California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA)*, an assessment aligned to a subset of the California content standards in English-language arts and mathematics.

Were there any changes to the CSTs in 2005?

There were no changes to the *CSTs* in 2005, but new science tests required by federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation were field-tested in grades eight and ten. The field-test results will not be reported on any 2005 student or summary reports. These two new tests will be operational in the spring of 2006.

Test Content and Format

What grade levels and subject areas are tested on the CSTs?

The *CSTs* are given at specific grade levels or for specific courses. Students take two, three, or four *CSTs* depending on their grade level or the course they are taking. Subject areas tested by the *CSTs* at each grade level in 2005 are as follows:

- Grades two, three, four, six, and seven
 - English-language arts*
 - Mathematics
- Grade five
 - English-language arts
 - Mathematics
 - Science
- Grade eight
 - English-language arts
 - Mathematics (end-of-course tests)
 - History-social science
- Grade nine
 - English-language arts
 - Mathematics (end-of-course tests)
 - Science (end-of-course tests)
- Grades ten and eleven
 - English-language arts
 - Mathematics (end-of-course tests)
 - Science (end-of-course tests)
 - History-social science

* Students in grades four and seven also complete a writing task as part of the *CST in English-Language Arts*.

What content is tested on the CSTs?

All of the CSTs are aligned to state content standards. These standards, approved by the State Board of Education (SBE), describe the knowledge, concepts, and skills that students should learn at each grade level. State content standards are available on the California Department of Education (CDE) Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/index.asp>.

Many CSTs cover content standards for one grade-level subject area or one course. Two exceptions are the *Grade Five Science CST* and the *Grade Eight History-Social Science CST*. These tests cover content standards for more than one grade level. The *Grade Five Science CST* covers science content standards for grades four and five. The *Grade Eight History-Social Science CST* covers history-social science content standards for grades six, seven, and eight.

What are the end-of-course CSTs in mathematics?

There are eight end-of-course CSTs in mathematics. Students in grades eight through eleven take an end-of-course CST in mathematics according to the following guidelines:

- The *General Mathematics CST* is for students in grades eight and nine who are not enrolled in or completing a standards-based mathematics course designated for these grades. For example, grade eight students who are completing the first year of a two-year Algebra I sequence take the *General Mathematics CST*. The *General Mathematics CST* is based on content standards for grades six and seven.
- The *CSTs in Algebra I, Geometry, or Algebra II* are for students in grades eight through eleven who are completing the respective mathematics course. These CSTs are based on the content standards for Algebra I, Geometry, or Algebra II, respectively.

- The *CSTs in Integrated Mathematics 1, Integrated Mathematics 2, or Integrated Mathematics 3* are for students in grades eight through eleven who are completing the respective integrated mathematics course. These CSTs are based on selected combinations of content standards from Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II.
- The *Summative High School Mathematics CST* is for the following two categories of students:
 - Students in grades nine and ten who completed Algebra II or Integrated Mathematics 3 during a previous school year. These students will take the *Summative High School Mathematics CST* each year through grade eleven.
 - Students in grade eleven who completed Algebra II or Integrated Mathematics 3 any time prior to the beginning of STAR Program testing. This includes students in grade eleven who are taking higher mathematics courses or no mathematics courses.

What are the end-of-course CSTs in science?

There are a total of eight end-of-course CSTs in science. There are four end-of-course CSTs in science, which are based on the content standards for earth science, biology, chemistry, and physics respectively. In addition, there are four end-of-course CSTs for integrated/coordinated science, which are based on selected combinations of the content standards for earth science, biology, chemistry, and physics. Only students completing a standards-based science course take a CST in science.

What question formats are found on the CSTs?

Questions for all of the CSTs, except for the writing tasks in grades four and seven, are in a multiple-choice format. Students are presented with a question and asked to select the correct answer from four possible choices. Students mark their

answer choices in the test booklet for grades two and three and on an answer document for grades four through eleven. All multiple-choice questions are machine scored.

For the *CST in English-Language Arts*, students in grades four and seven respond to multiple-choice questions and write an essay in response to a writing task or prompt. The score on the writing task is combined with the results of the multiple-choice questions to produce the performance level for English-language arts.

Writing Tasks in Grades Four and Seven

What standards are tested on the writing task in grades four and seven?

The writing tasks in grades four and seven address the writing applications strand from the state content standards in English-language arts.

In grade four, students are required to produce one of three types of writing: narratives (stories), summaries, or responses to literature. In grade seven, students are required to produce one of four types of writing: fictional narratives, persuasive essays or letters, summaries, or responses to literature. In spring 2005, students in grade four were required to write a narrative (story). Students in grade seven were required to write a fictional narrative.

How were the writing tasks for 2005 scored?

The student responses to the writing tasks were scored using a four-point holistic rubric, with four being the highest score. The criteria in the rubric were derived from the content standards for the English-language arts strands of writing applications, writing strategies, and written conventions.

Additional information about the writing tasks is available in teacher guides for grades four and seven at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp> on the Internet. These guides include sample writing tasks with student work and teacher commentaries about the work as well as the rubrics used to score student writing.

Reporting CST Results

How are the CST results reported to parents and guardians?

The CST results of individual students are reported to parents and guardians on The STAR Student Report. These results are based on how well students achieve identified state content standards. The results are reported according to scale scores and the corresponding performance levels approved by the SBE. The five performance levels designated for reporting overall CST results are advanced, proficient, basic, below basic, and far below basic. The state target is for all students to score at the proficient or advanced levels.

In addition to scale scores and performance levels, The STAR Student Report provides the percent correct for each content area. For example, the *CST in English-Language Arts* report includes the student's percent correct for each of five content areas: word analysis and vocabulary development, reading comprehension, literary response and analysis, written conventions, and writing strategies. For grades four and seven, the percent correct is reported for writing applications.

The STAR Student Report also provides a comparison of each student's percent correct to the percent correct range for students in the state who scored proficient on the total test.

What are performance levels?

The performance levels establish the cut points at which students have demonstrated sufficient knowledge and skills to be regarded as performing at a particular achievement level. The range of scale scores for each performance level has been established by grade level and subject area or course and does not change from year to year.

What are scale scores?

The CSTs are reported as scale scores that range from 150 to 600. The number or percentage of questions that students must answer to score at any specific performance level may change slightly from year to year due to differences in difficulty levels of the tests. Scale scores are used to adjust for these differences and to equate the test between years. The minimum scale score for the proficient level is 350. The scale score ranges for all subject areas and levels on the CSTs are on pages 11 through 13.

If a student with disabilities took a CST with accommodations or modifications, is this reported on The STAR Student Report?

If a student with disabilities took any CST with accommodations or modifications, The STAR Student Report will include the student's scores for each CST completed. If the student tested below his or her grade level, the student report will indicate that a below-level test was taken, the grade level of the test, and the scores for the test taken.

The accommodations or modifications provided on the CSTs are specified in each student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan. A complete list of allowable accommodations and modifications is outlined in the *Matrix of Test Variations, Accommodations, and Modifications for Administration of California Statewide Assessments* that is available on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/>.

California Reading List (CRL)

What is the California Reading List?

The California Reading List (CRL) is a Web-based tool that gives students and their parents and guardians access to collections of book titles organized by levels of reading difficulty. A CRL Number, which is based on the student's score on the *CST in English-Language Arts*, identifies the list of books appropriate for a student's independent reading level. Each list includes book titles that cover a range of genres (e.g., fiction, nonfiction, plays, poetry), subjects, and interests.

Where is the CRL?

The CRL can be accessed on the Internet at <http://star.cde.ca.gov>. The specific list for a student and other information about the books on this list (e.g., author, classification, summary) can be viewed or printed from this site.

Where can parents and guardians find the CRL Number for their students?

The CRL Number is printed on the lower left of the back page of The STAR Student Report.

Early Assessment Program

What is the Early Assessment Program?

The Early Assessment Program (EAP) is a joint venture of the CDE, the SBE, and the California State University (CSU) system. As part of the EAP, the *Early Assessments of Readiness for College English* and the *Early Assessment of Readiness for College Mathematics* are administered with the STAR Program. These EAP assessments are included in the English-language arts portion of the grade eleven CST booklet and in the *Algebra II CST* and *Summative High School Mathematics CST* booklets. Grade eleven students who are eligible to take these CSTs may participate in the EAP for English or mathematics. Grade twelve students may not participate in the EAP.

What is the purpose of the EAP in English and mathematics?

Students' results on the EAP in English and/or mathematics may exempt students from taking placement tests that the CSU requires for entering college freshmen. If the EAP results indicate that the students will not be exempt from taking the CSU placement tests, students may want to take additional course work or adjust their classes in grade twelve to be better prepared for college. EAP results will be used by the CSU only after a student is admitted.

How will students receive their EAP results?

Students will receive the EAP results in the fall following their junior year of high school. The EAP report of results will come from the CSU system and will not be part of The STAR Student Report.

How can parents and guardians obtain information about the EAP?

Parents and guardians can obtain information about the EAP by contacting their student's counseling office at the high school during regular school hours or by checking the CSU Web site at <http://www.calstate.edu/eap/>.

Additional Information

Additional information about the STAR Program and the CSTs is available from the STAR Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/index.asp> or by contacting the STAR Office at STAR@cde.ca.gov or (916) 445-8765.

Note: Parents and guardians should be reminded that student scores are maintained only by the school district. CDE does not keep student scores and cannot respond to parent/guardian requests for students' scores.

2005 STAR Program Scale Score Ranges for CST Performance Levels (by subject area and grade)

English-Language Arts

Grade	Far Below Basic	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
2	150–261	262–299	300–349	350–401	402–600
3	150–258	259–299	300–349	350–401	402–600
4	150–268	269–299	300–349	350–392	393–600
5	150–270	271–299	300–349	350–394	395–600
6	150–267	268–299	300–349	350–393	394–600
7	150–262	263–299	300–349	350–400	401–600
8	150–265	266–299	300–349	350–394	395–600
9	150–264	265–299	300–349	350–396	397–600
10	150–262	263–299	300–349	350–391	392–600
11	150–258	259–299	300–349	350–395	396–600

Mathematics

Grade	Far Below Basic	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
2	150–235	236–299	300–349	350–413	414–600
3	150–235	236–299	300–349	350–413	414–600
4	150–244	245–299	300–349	350–400	401–600
5	150–247	248–299	300–349	350–429	430–600
6	150–252	253–299	300–349	350–414	415–600
7	150–256	257–299	300–349	350–413	414–600
General Mathematics*	150–256	257–299	300–349	350–413	414–600
Algebra I	150–252	253–299	300–349	350–427	428–600
Geometry	150–246	247–299	300–349	350–417	418–600
Algebra II	150–256	257–299	300–349	350–415	416–600
Summative High School Mathematics	150–234	235–299	300–349	350–419	420–600
Integrated Mathematics 1	150–248	249–299	300–349	350–424	425–600
Integrated Mathematics 2	150–257	258–299	300–349	350–417	418–600
Integrated Mathematics 3	150–251	252–299	300–349	350–427	428–600

* The *General Mathematics CST* is for students in grades eight and nine who are not enrolled in or completing a standards-based mathematics course designated for these grades. For example, grade eight students who are completing the first year of a two-year Algebra I sequence take the *General Mathematics CST*. The *General Mathematics CST* is based on content standards for grades six and seven.

History-Social Science

Grade	Far Below Basic	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
8 Grade 6–8 Standards	150–270	271–299	300–349	350–395	396–600
10 World History	150–274	275–299	300–349	350–399	400–600
11 United States History	150–269	270–299	300–349	350–400	401–600

Science

Course	Far Below Basic	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
5 Grade 4–5 Standards	150–267	268–299	300–349	350–409	410–600
Earth Science	150–276	277–299	300–349	350–392	393–600
Biology	150–275	276–299	300–349	350–393	394–600
Chemistry	150–275	276–299	300–349	350–393	394–600
Physics	150–275	276–299	300–349	350–392	393–600
Integrated/ Coordinated Science 1	150–276	277–299	300–349	350–389	390–600
Integrated/ Coordinated Science 2	150–277	278–299	300–349	350–390	391–600
Integrated/ Coordinated Science 3	150–275	276–299	300–349	350–390	391–600
Integrated/ Coordinated Science 4	150–275	276–299	300–349	350–396	397–600

Part A: Section II

Communicating About the 2005 *California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA)*

Communicating
About the *California
Alternate Performance
Assessment (CAPA)*

Scale Score Ranges
for *CAPA* Performance
Levels

2005 STAR Program

Communicating About the *California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA)*

What is the CAPA?

The *California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA)* is a performance assessment for students with significant cognitive disabilities who are unable to take the *California Standards Tests (CSTs)* and the *California Achievement Tests, Sixth Edition Survey (CAT/6 Survey)* even with accommodations or modifications. (The *CAT/6 Survey* is given only in grades three and seven.) The *CAPA* was added to the STAR Program in 2003 to ensure that all California students could participate in statewide assessments.

Must all students take the CSTs and the CAT/6 Survey or the CAPA?

Yes. All students enrolled in grades two through eleven are expected to participate in the STAR Program by taking either the *CSTs* and the *CAT/6 Survey* (for grades three and seven) or the *CAPA*.

Who took the CAPA in 2005?

Special education students with significant cognitive disabilities enrolled in grades two through eleven and special education students between the ages of seven and sixteen in ungraded programs took the *CAPA* in 2005.

How do schools determine if a student takes the CAPA and what level of the CAPA he or she takes?

Each student's individualized education program (IEP) team determines if a student takes the *CAPA* and what level of the *CAPA* he or she takes. The *CAPA* has five levels. Most students eligible for the *CAPA* take the level corresponding to their grade placement.

What are the five CAPA levels offered?

The five *CAPA* levels are as follows:

- Level I — grades two through eleven for students with complex, profound disabilities
- Level II — grades two and three
- Level III — grades four and five
- Level IV — grades six through eight
- Level V — grades nine through eleven

What subject areas were assessed by the CAPA in 2005?

For the 2005 administration, students were assessed in English-language arts and mathematics. Students taking the *CAPA* in grades five, eight, and ten also participated in a field test of science performance tasks. The *CAPA* is aligned to a subset of the California content standards that is appropriate for students taking the *CAPA*. The subset of standards identified for the *CAPA* is posted on the California Department of Education (CDE) Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/sr/cntntstnd.asp>.

Who administers the CAPA?

A certificated or licensed school staff member who has been trained in *CAPA* testing procedures administers the *CAPA*.

How are CAPA questions asked?

The *CAPA* is administered individually. The examiner asks the student to perform a task, then observes the performance and records the response according to a specific scoring guide.

How are the CAPA results reported?

The reporting process for the CAPA is much like the process used for other tests within the STAR Program. School districts receive STAR student reports (CAPA Version) for distribution to parents and guardians and school and school district reports for use by school district and school staffs. In addition to the individual reports, group CAPA results for schools, school districts, counties, and the state are posted annually on the CDE Web site at <http://star.cde.ca.gov>.

What results will be reported for the 2005 CAPA?

CAPA reports for the 2005 administration will show how well students performed according to a subset of the California content standards in English-language arts and mathematics. Results will show the student's CAPA scale score and performance level for each content area tested. The State Board of Education (SBE) established five performance levels for reporting CAPA results: advanced, proficient, basic, below basic, and far below basic.

Using CAPA Results

How are CAPA results used?

The IEP team—including teachers, administrators, parents and guardians, and support staff—uses CAPA results to help monitor each student's academic progress. Individual student results are merged to prepare grade-level reports by subject for each school, school district, county, and the state. The results are used with other information about student achievement to help make decisions about ways to improve student learning and school programs. CAPA scores also are used, with results of other state tests, to meet state and federal school accountability requirements.

Additional Information

Additional information about the STAR Program and the CAPA is available from the STAR Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/index.asp> or by contacting the STAR Office at STAR@cde.ca.gov or (916) 445-8765.

Note: Parents and guardians should be reminded that student scores are maintained only by the school district. CDE does not keep student scores and cannot respond to parent/guardian requests for students scores.

2005 STAR Program Scale Score Ranges for CAPA Performance Levels (by subject area and CAPA level)

English-Language Arts

CAPA Level	Performance Level				
	Far Below Basic	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
I	15-25	26-29	30-34	35-45	46-60
II	15-23	24-29	30-34	35-40	41-60
III	15-22	23-29	30-34	35-40	41-60
IV	15-24	25-29	30-34	35-40	41-60
V	15-24	25-29	30-34	35-41	42-60

Mathematics

CAPA Level	Performance Level				
	Far Below Basic	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
I	15-20	21-29	30-34	35-42	43-60
II	15-25	26-29	30-34	35-40	41-60
III	15-24	25-29	30-34	35-42	43-60
IV	15-25	26-29	30-34	35-40	41-60
V	15-26	27-29	30-34	35-40	41-60

Part A: Section III

Newsletter Inserts and Sample Letters

About This Section...

The model newsletter inserts and letters provided in this section may be used by school district and site administrators and school staffs responsible for informing parents and guardians about the 2005 STAR Program and their students' results. These materials can be used as formatted in this packet or customized by downloading the text-only versions from the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp>. In addition to distributing copies via regular mailings and at meetings, copies may be posted on the school district or school Web site.

Sample School/Home Newsletter Inserts:

Spotlight on STAR 2005:
How Are STAR Program
Results Used to Help
Students? (Insert #Seven)

Spotlight on STAR 2005:
How Are STAR Program
Results Used for School
Accountability? (Insert
#Eight)

School District or Site Administrator's Sample Letters for STAR Student Reports



Spotlight on STAR 2005

STANDARDIZED TESTING AND REPORTING (STAR) PROGRAM

How Are STAR Program Results Used to Help Students?

The tests that make up the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program provide results that are used to inform students, parents, guardians, and teachers about how well students are achieving state-adopted content standards for each subject area tested.

A STAR student report is produced for every student tested with the *California Standards Tests (CSTs)* and the *California Achievement Tests, Sixth Edition Survey (CAT/6 Survey)*, for grades three and seven, or the *California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA)*. School districts where students were tested receive the individual student reports to distribute to parents and guardians.

Identifying Academic Strengths and Needs

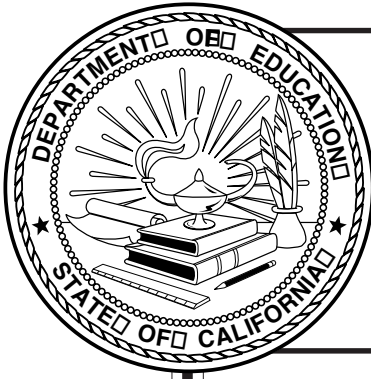
The STAR Student Report provides information that may be used in identifying individual student's academic strengths and areas that need improvement. When reviewing the report, parents and guardians should begin by looking at the level of performance and scale score their students achieved in each subject area

tested by the CSTs or the CAPA. Performance levels of proficient or advanced indicate that students are meeting the state's target for academic achievement. Performance levels of basic, below basic, and far below basic indicate subject areas that need improvement.

In addition, The STAR Student Report includes the scores for specific content areas within each subject area tested. For example, the *CST in English-Language Arts* may include five content areas: word analysis and vocabulary development, reading comprehension, literary response and analysis, written conventions, and writing strategies. Explanatory notes that accompany each STAR student report will help parents and guardians understand what these scores mean for their students.

Meetings with Teachers

When meeting with the students' teachers, parents and guardians should review identified areas of concern and discuss specific assistance their students may need to improve their achievement.



Spotlight on STAR 2005

STANDARDIZED TESTING AND REPORTING (STAR) PROGRAM

How Are STAR Program Results Used to Help Students? (continued)

Alignment to Standards

Since the *CSTs* and the *CAPA* are based on the state content standards, parents and guardians should talk with the teachers about ways to improve their students' achievement in meeting those standards. Parents and guardians also should ask their students' teachers how the school curriculum and classroom instruction are aligned to state standards. A copy of the California content standards for all subjects tested is available at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/> on the Internet.

California Reading List

The STAR Student Report provides a California Reading List (CRL) Number that is based on each student's score on the *CST in English-Language Arts*. The CRL Number gives parents, guardians, students, and teachers information to access a list of books that should be at an appropriate reading level for the student. The list is available on the Internet at <http://star.cde.ca.gov>. Parents and guardians may use the CRL to help students select books to read at home.

A More Complete Picture

Parents and guardians should keep in mind that the information in The STAR Student Report is one source of information about the progress students are making in school. Grades, classroom work, and other test results also should be reviewed for a more complete picture of each student's academic progress. Parents and guardians also are encouraged to discuss with teachers any differences between test results and the work students generally do at school.

If you have any questions about the STAR Program, please call the school at **[insert local telephone number]**.

Parents and guardians are invited to attend a STAR Program information session scheduled for **[insert local date and location]**.



Spotlight on STAR 2005

STANDARDIZED TESTING AND REPORTING (STAR) PROGRAM

How Are STAR Program Results Used for School Accountability?

The tests that make up the STAR Program provide results that are used for different purposes. One of the major purposes is for school accountability. State and federal accountability programs monitor each school's progress toward achieving established learning goals. The scores of every student on state tests count in these accountability programs.

The Academic Performance Index (API)

A major component of California's Public Schools Accountability Act (PSAA) is the Academic Performance Index (API). The API is used to set growth targets and monitor the academic performance of schools.

The API is a number that ranges from 200 to 1000. California has set 800 as the API goal that schools should strive to meet. Schools are required to meet annual growth targets until the goal of 800 is reached. Schools that already meet or exceed 800 must continue to work to improve the academic performance of all of their students.

Results from students in grades two through eleven who have taken various tests are

used to calculate the API. The *California Standards Tests (CSTs)*, the *California Achievement Tests, Sixth Edition Survey (CAT/6 Survey)* for grades three and seven only, and the *California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA)* as well as the *California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE)* for high school are used to derive the API for a school.

API Schoolwide and Subgroup Reports

The API reports, which are posted on the Internet, include schoolwide information as well as information for groups of students within the school. Student groups are based on ethnicity and socioeconomic status. Schools are expected to meet the schoolwide and student group targets for growth. Schools that continuously do not meet their growth targets may be subject to interventions.

To have an API reported, a school must have STAR Program and/or *CAHSEE* results from at least 85 percent of the students enrolled. Also, schools with five percent or more testing irregularities do not have an API reported.



Spotlight on STAR 2005

STANDARDIZED TESTING AND REPORTING (STAR) PROGRAM

How Are STAR Program Results Used for School Accountability? (continued)

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

The STAR Program and *CAHSEE* results also are used to meet the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirement that all schools make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The goal for NCLB is that all students are proficient in English-language arts and mathematics by 2014. Each year, California schools must show that a specified percentage of students in grades two through eight are performing at or above the proficient level on the English-language arts and mathematics CSTs and the *CAPA*. At the high school level, results of the *CAHSEE* and *CAPA* in grade ten are used in place of the CSTs to make this determination.

In addition to the academic goals, making AYP requires that at least 95 percent of the school's students take the CSTs or *CAPA* in grades two through eight or the *CAHSEE* and *CAPA* in grade ten. Schools need to meet the schoolwide goals as well as those for student groups, including English learners and students with disabilities. Furthermore, schools must meet minimum API criteria and high schools must meet

graduation criteria to make AYP. Schools with no API reported do not make AYP.

Every Student Counts

Every student counts in the calculation of the API and AYP. Students who do not participate or do not take an appropriate CST can affect the school's API and AYP. First, students who do not take these tests can keep the school from meeting the required participation rates. In addition, some nonparticipating students may be counted in the API and AYP calculations at the same performance level as the lowest-scoring students. It is important, therefore, for all students to participate in the STAR Program and *CAHSEE* and for all students to be tested with the appropriate CSTs.

If you have any questions about the STAR Program, please call the school's STAR Hotline at **[insert local telephone number]**. Parents and guardians are invited to attend a STAR Program information session scheduled for **[insert local date and location]**.

School District or Site Administrator's Sample Letter for STAR Student Reports

Grades Two through Eight (CSTs and CAT/6 Survey)

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Enclosed is The STAR Student Report that provides your student's 2005 test results for the *California Standards Tests (CSTs)*. These tests are an important part of the California Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program. The purpose of the CSTs is to determine how well students in grades two through eleven are achieving California's content standards.

The following subject areas were tested by the CSTs at each grade level:

■ Grades two, three, four, six, and seven:

- English-language arts
- Mathematics
- Written composition (grades four and seven)

■ Grade eight:

- English-language arts
- Mathematics (end-of-course tests)
- History-social science

■ Grade five:

- English-language arts
- Mathematics
- Science

Students answered the multiple-choice questions on the CSTs by selecting one of four options as the correct answer. For the *CST in English-Language Arts*, students in grades four and seven also were required to write a narrative in response to a writing task. Scores on the multiple-choice questions and the written essay are combined to determine the overall score for the *CST in English-Language Arts*.

An additional component of the STAR Program, the *California Achievement Tests, Sixth Edition Survey (CAT/6 Survey)*, was given to students in grades three and seven. The *CAT/6 Survey* assesses students in reading, language, mathematics, and spelling. Results of the *CAT/6 Survey* also are included in The STAR Student Report for grades three and seven.

The state target is for all students to perform at the proficient level on the CSTs. If your student's performance is at the basic, below basic, or far below basic level in one or more subject areas tested, you are encouraged to schedule a meeting with your student's teacher(s) to discuss assistance the school can provide to help your student improve his or her academic progress. Attached to The STAR Student Report are explanatory notes to help you understand your student's scores.

It is important to keep in mind that information on The STAR Student Report is one source of information about the progress your student is making in school. Classroom work, grades, and other test results should also be reviewed for a more complete picture of your student's academic progress.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the school at **[insert contact information]** or talk with your student's teacher(s). You are also invited to attend a STAR Program information meeting being held **[insert date]** at **[insert time]** in **[insert school location]**. We look forward to talking with you about your student's educational achievements.

Sincerely,

School District or Site Administrator's Sample Letter for STAR Student Reports

Grades Nine, Ten, and Eleven

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Enclosed is The STAR Student Report that provides your student's 2005 test results for the *California Standards Tests (CSTs)*. These tests are an important part of the California Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program. The purpose of the *CSTs* is to determine how well students in grades two through eleven are achieving California's content standards.

Students answered the multiple-choice questions on the *CSTs* by selecting one of four options as the correct answer. The following subject areas were tested by the *CST* at each grade level:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ■ Grade nine: | ■ Grades ten and eleven: |
| • English-language arts | • English-language arts |
| • Mathematics (end-of-course tests) | • History-social science |
| • Science (end-of-course tests) | • Mathematics (end-of-course tests) |
| | • Science (end-of-course tests) |

Along with The STAR Student Report, you also will find explanatory notes designed to help you understand your student's scores.

The state target is for all students to perform at the proficient level on the *CSTs*. If your student's performance is at the basic, below basic, or far below basic level in one or more subject areas tested, you are encouraged to schedule a meeting with your student's teacher(s) or counselor to discuss assistance the school can provide to help your student improve his or her academic progress.

It is important to keep in mind that information on The STAR Student Report is one source of information about the progress your student is making in school. Classroom work, grades, and other test results should also be reviewed for a more complete picture of your student's academic progress.

If you have any questions about your student's report, please don't hesitate to contact the school at **[insert contact information]** or talk with your student's teacher(s) or counselor. You are also invited to attend a STAR Program information meeting being held **[insert date]** at **[insert time]** in **[insert school location]**. We look forward to talking with you about your student's educational achievements.

Sincerely,

School District or Site Administrator's Sample Letter for STAR Student Reports

CAPA Version

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Enclosed is The STAR Student Report that provides your student's test results for the 2005 California Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program.

Your student participated in the STAR Program by taking the *California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA)*. The purpose of the tests is to measure your student's understanding of a subset of California's content standards for English-language arts and mathematics.

The CAPA levels are designated for specific grade levels as follows:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ■ Level I — grades two through eleven for students with complex, profound disabilities | ■ Level III — grades four and five |
| ■ Level II — grades two and three | ■ Level IV — grades six through eight |
| | ■ Level V — grades nine through eleven |

In addition to The STAR Student Report, you also will find explanatory notes designed to help you understand your student's scores.

If you have any questions about your student's report, please don't hesitate to contact the school at **[insert contact information]** or talk with your student's teacher(s). You are also invited to attend a STAR Program information meeting about the CAPA being held **[insert date]** at **[insert time]** in **[insert school location]**. We look forward to talking with you about your student's educational achievements.

Sincerely,

School District or Site Administrator's Sample Letter for STAR Student Reports

SABE/2 Home Report

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Enclosed are your student's 2005 test results for the *Spanish Assessment of Basic Education, Second Edition (SABE/2)* that is given each spring as part of the California Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program. The purpose of the SABE/2 is to determine how well your student is achieving academically when tested in his or her home language of Spanish.

Students answer the multiple-choice questions by selecting one of four options as the correct answer. The following subject areas are tested by the SABE/2 at each grade level:

■ Grades two through eight:

- Reading
- Mathematics
- Language
- Spelling

■ Grades nine through eleven:

- Reading
- Mathematics
- Language

The enclosed SABE/2 Home Report provides the test results in Spanish. You also will find a brief explanation about this report that is designed to help you understand your student's scores.

Your student also participated in the STAR Program by taking the *California Standards Tests (CSTs)* and, if he/she was in grade three or seven, the *California Achievement Test, Sixth Edition Survey (CAT/6 Survey)*. Both of these tests are given in English. The test results are reported in The STAR Student Report that will be sent to your home in a separate mailing.

If you have any questions about your student's SABE/2 Home Report or The STAR Student Report, please don't hesitate to contact the school at **[insert contact information]** or talk with your student's teacher(s) or counselor. You are also invited to attend a STAR Program information meeting being held **[insert date]** at **[insert time]** in **[insert school location]**. We look forward to talking with you about your student's educational achievement.

Sincerely,

The STAR Student Report

Explaining 2005 Test Results
to Parents and Guardians

Part B

Information for Parents and Guardians

Table of Contents — Part B

- 1** Introduction to Part B
- 2** Parent/Guardian Guide to the 2005 STAR Program
- 4** Parent/Guardian Guide to the *California Writing Standards Test*
- 6** Parent/Guardian Guide to the *California Alternate Performance Assessment*
- 8** Sample STAR Student Reports with Explanatory Notes

Introduction to Part B

Part B includes three sample guides, or brochures, that school district and school staffs can print and distribute to parents and guardians. These materials provide key information about the STAR Program in a straightforward question and answer format. Each two-page guide may be distributed through regular mailings, information meetings, or presentations. They may also be posted on the school district or school Web site. These guides are ideal publications for distribution along with the appropriate STAR student report as suggested below.

In addition to direct distribution to parents and guardians, these guides may be distributed to groups, agencies, and community members who

work with parents and guardians. All of these communications efforts can help families become better informed and more involved in their student's education. Spanish translations of the three guides are forthcoming on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp>.

In addition to the guides, sample STAR student reports and accompanying explanatory notes also are included in Part B for review by parents and guardians.

Explanatory notes will be provided to school districts by the testing contractor for distribution with the STAR student reports. School districts will be receiving their STAR students reports in July and August.

Parent/Guardian Guide	The STAR Student Report
2005 STAR Program	All reports
<i>California Writing Standards Test</i>	Reports for grade four or seven only
<i>California Alternate Performance Assessment</i>	CAPA Version



STAR

Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program

Parent/Guardian Guide to the 2005 STAR Program

The Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program, an important part of the state assessment system, is administered annually in the spring to measure how well students in California public schools are achieving state content standards. These achievement tests assess English-language arts and mathematics in all grades tested. In addition, tests in history-social science and science are given in selected grades.

Educating students is a team effort. Parents, guardians, students, schools, and communities benefit when there is a shared responsibility for learning. To fully participate as part of this team, parents and guardians should have a thorough understanding of the role the STAR Program tests play in making sure that all students achieve California's content standards.

Questions and Answers About the STAR Program

Who takes the 2005 STAR Program tests?

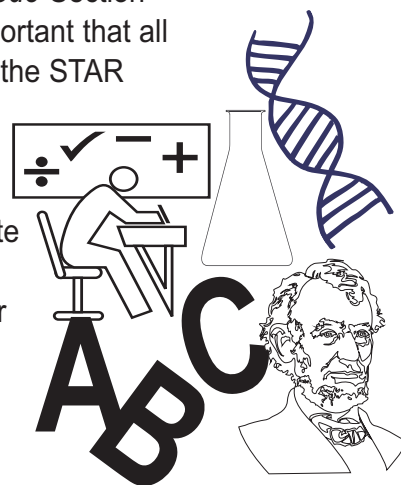
All students in grades two through eleven participate by taking one or more of the following four series of tests that make up the STAR Program:

- The *California Standards Tests (CSTs)*, a series of achievement tests developed for California public schools to assess state content standards.

- The *California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA)*, developed for students with significant cognitive disabilities who are not able to take the *CSTs* and the *CAT/6 Survey*.
- The *California Achievement Tests, Sixth Edition (CAT/6 Survey)*, nationally norm-referenced achievement tests, given in grades three and seven only, that measure general academic knowledge and provide national comparisons.
- The *Spanish Assessment of Basic Education, Second Edition (SABE/2)*, a nationally norm-referenced achievement test of basic skills in Spanish for Spanish-speaking English learners.

Does my student have to participate in the annual STAR Program testing?

Yes. All students must participate unless their parents or guardians have submitted written requests to exempt them from STAR Program testing (*Education Code Section 60615*). It is very important that all students take part in the STAR Program. Each school must have at least 95 percent of its students participate in statewide assessments in order to meet federal accountability requirements.



Parent/Guardian Guide to the 2005 STAR Program

What is done to assist students with disabilities?

Most students with disabilities take the STAR Program tests along with all other students and under standard conditions. Some students with disabilities may require testing variations, modifications, and/or accommodations to be able to take the tests. The *Matrix of Test Variations, Accommodations, and Modifications for Administration of California Statewide Assessments* is available on the California Department of Education (CDE) Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr>.

Can I see sample questions from the CSTs?

Yes. Sample questions from previous CSTs are available on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp>.

When will I receive my student's 2005 STAR Student Report?

Most parents and guardians will receive the 2005 STAR student reports by mid-September.

What information will my student's report include?

Your student's report will focus on results of the CSTs. When reviewing the report, you first will see scale scores and performance levels for each subject area tested. Performance levels of proficient or advanced indicate that your student is meeting or surpassing the state's target for academic achievement. Performance levels of basic, below basic, and far below basic indicate areas of learning that need improvement.

In addition, The STAR Student Report includes scores for specific content areas within each subject area tested and a California Reading List (CRL) Number. An explanation about all of the information included in your student's report will accompany each STAR student report.

What is the California Reading List Number?

The STAR Student Report includes a California Reading List (CRL) Number that is based on each student's score on the *CST in English-Language Arts*. The CRL Number directs parents, guardians, students, and teachers to a list of books that are appropriate for a student's reading level. The list is available on the Internet at <http://star.cde.ca.gov>. You and your student are encouraged to use this list to select books for reading at home.

How are the 2005 STAR Program results used to improve my student's education?

- STAR Program results provide information about each student's progress that is used to help parents or guardians and teachers work together to improve student learning.
- Schools use the STAR Program results to help make decisions about how best to support student achievement.
- Along with other available data, STAR Program results also can be used to assist in identifying students for promotion or retention and special programs for intervention or enrichment.

How to find out more...

If you have additional questions about the California content standards or the STAR Program, please direct them to your student's teacher, counselor, or school office.



STAR

2005 Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program

Parent/Guardian Guide to the *California Writing Standards Test*

Each spring, public school students in grades four and seven complete a writing task as part of the *California Language-Arts Standards Test (CST in English-Language Arts)*. The *California Writing Standards Test (CST in Writing)* requires students to write one essay in response to a writing task (prompt). State law (*Education Code* Section 60642) added the *CST in Writing* to the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program in 2001.

Questions and Answers About the *CST in Writing*

Who takes the CST in Writing?

All students in grades four and seven who take the *CST in English-Language Arts* also take the writing test for their respective grade level.

What type of essay are students required to write?

Students in grade four may be asked to write a narrative (story), a response to literature, or a summary of an article. Students in grade seven may be asked to write a fictional narrative (story), a response to literature, a persuasive letter or essay, or a summary of an article.

Where can parents and guardians see sample writing tasks?

Writing tasks used in previous STAR Program administrations have been released for public viewing. These tasks are available on the

California Department of Education (CDE) Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp>. All writing tasks address state writing strategies, writing applications, and written conventions standards that are part of the *California English-Language Arts Content Standards*.

How much time are students given to write the essay?

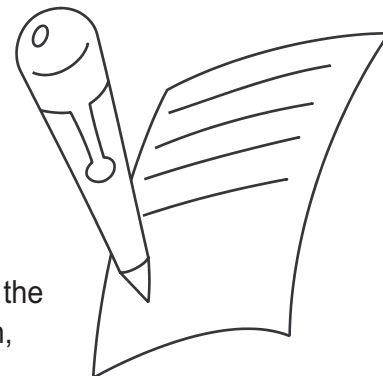
The test is untimed, and students are given enough time to complete one draft of the essay. Readers who score the essays take into account that each essay is a first draft.

How are the student essays scored?

Experienced readers are trained to use specific guidelines (rubrics) to score the student essays. These scoring guidelines are found at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp>.

What are the key traits readers look for to determine the score?

Readers carefully read each essay to determine the level of writing skills the student has shown. For example, readers examine essays to see if ideas and concepts are thoroughly developed and supported with appropriate details. Readers also evaluate the essays for organization,



Parent/Guardian Guide to the *California Writing Standards Test*

sentence structure, grammar, and mechanics (i.e., spelling, punctuation, capitalization).

What is the “passing” score for the CST in Writing?

There is no “passing” score for the *CST in Writing*. The essay score is combined with scores of the multiple-choice questions to produce an overall performance level for the *CST in English-Language Arts*. The percent correct for the writing test is reported in the Writing Applications Content Area on The STAR Student Report.

Helping Your Students Improve Their Writing

The following are some suggested ways you can help your students improve their writing skills:

- Talk with teachers and administrators about the school’s writing program and the expectations for students’ writing performance. When you share a common understanding of the writing skills your students are being taught at school, you can provide more effective support at home.
- Encourage your students to write—lists, notes, thank-you notes, requests, journals, recipes, book reports, short stories, e-mails, etc. As with any skill, writing improves the more it is practiced.

- For writing assignments, talk with your students about what they are being asked to do and help them list the points to be covered. As your students complete the assignment, point out parts that are written well and ask questions about parts that are not clear. Help your students focus on developing their ideas in their writing before correcting the mechanics (i.e., spelling, punctuation, capitalization).
- Provide your students with the things they need to write. In addition to paper, pencils, and other writing tools, make sure your students have a quiet place to write and a folder or notebook to keep their ideas, drafts, and other efforts of their writing activities.

How to find out more...

If you have additional questions about your school’s writing program, please direct them to your student’s teacher, counselor, or school office. If you have additional questions about the *CST in Writing* or any STAR Program tests, go to the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/index.asp>.



STAR

2005 Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program

Parent/Guardian Guide to the *California Alternate Performance Assessment*

The *California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA)* is part of the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program. This test is a performance assessment for students with significant cognitive disabilities who are unable to take the *California Standards Tests (CSTs)* and the *California Achievement Tests, Sixth Edition Survey (CAT/6 Survey)* even with accommodations or modifications. (The *CAT/6 Survey* is given only in grades three and seven.) The goal of this alternate test is to ensure that all California students can participate in the STAR Program.

Questions and Answers About the CAPA

Who takes the CAPA?

The CAPA is taken by special education students with significant cognitive disabilities enrolled in grades two through eleven and special education students between the ages of seven and sixteen in ungraded programs.

Must all students take the CSTs or the CAPA?

Yes. All students must take the CSTs or the CAPA unless their parents or guardians have submitted written requests to exempt them from the STAR Program (*Education Code Section 60615*). It is very important that all students take part in the STAR Program, for each school must have at least

95 percent of its students participate in statewide assessments in order to meet federal accountability requirements.

How do schools decide if a student takes the CAPA and what level of the CAPA he or she takes?

Each student's individualized education program (IEP) team decides if a student takes the CAPA. There are five levels of the CAPA that he or she can take. Most students eligible for the CAPA take the level that corresponds to their grade placement.

Five CAPA Levels Provided

The five CAPA levels are as follows:

- Level I — grades two through eleven for students with complex, profound disabilities
- Level II — grades two and three
- Level III — grades four and five
- Level IV — grades six through eight
- Level V — grades nine through eleven

Parent/Guardian Guide to the *California Alternate Performance Assessment*

What subject areas did the CAPA assess in 2005?

In spring 2005, students were assessed in English-language arts and mathematics. Students taking the CAPA in grades five, eight, and ten also took part in a field test of science performance tasks. The CAPA is aligned to a subset of the California content standards that is appropriate for students taking the CAPA. The subset of content standards identified for the CAPA is posted on the California Department of Education (CDE) Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/sr/cntntstnd.asp>.

Who gives the CAPA and how are the questions asked?

A certificated or licensed school staff member who has been trained in CAPA testing procedures administers the CAPA. The examiner works with students individually. As each student is asked to perform a task, the examiner observes the performance and records the response according to a specific scoring guide.

When will I receive my student's 2005 STAR Student Report for the CAPA?

Most parents and guardians will receive the 2005 STAR student reports by mid-September.

What information will my student's report include?

The CAPA student report for the 2005 administration will show how well students performed according to a subset of the California content standards in English-language arts and mathematics. Results will show the student's CAPA scale score and performance level for each subject area tested. Performance levels of proficient or advanced indicate the student is meeting or exceeding the state's target for students taking the CAPA. Performance levels of basic, below basic, and far below basic indicate areas that need improvement.

Using CAPA Results

How are CAPA results used?

The IEP team—including teachers, administrators, parents, guardians, and/or support staff—uses CAPA results to help monitor your student's academic progress. The results also are reviewed with other information about student achievement to help make decisions about ways to improve student learning and school programs. In addition, CAPA scores are used, with results of other state tests, to meet state and federal school accountability requirements.

How to find out more...

If you have additional questions about the CAPA or the STAR Program, please direct them to your student's teacher or school office.

Sample STAR Student Reports with Explanatory Notes

Sample STAR Student Report for the CSTs

What's New About the 2005 California STAR Student Report

The Guide to Your STAR Student Report

Sample Home Report for the SABE/2

Explanation for the Student Home Report (SABE/2)

Sample STAR Student Report for the CSTs

The STAR Student Report

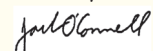
USING ASSESSMENT TO HELP STUDENTS LEARN

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Each year, California's Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program measures your child's progress in meeting California's content standards, which describe what all students should know and be able to do at each grade level.

This report shows your child's scores on the California Standards Tests and, if your child is taking a grade 3 or 7 test, scores on the California Achievement Tests, Sixth Edition Survey (CAT/6 Survey).

Sincerely,



JACK O'CONNELL,
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

STUDENT #: **0000032291**
GRADE: **4**

DATE OF BIRTH: **2/12/93**
TEST DATE: **Spring 2005**

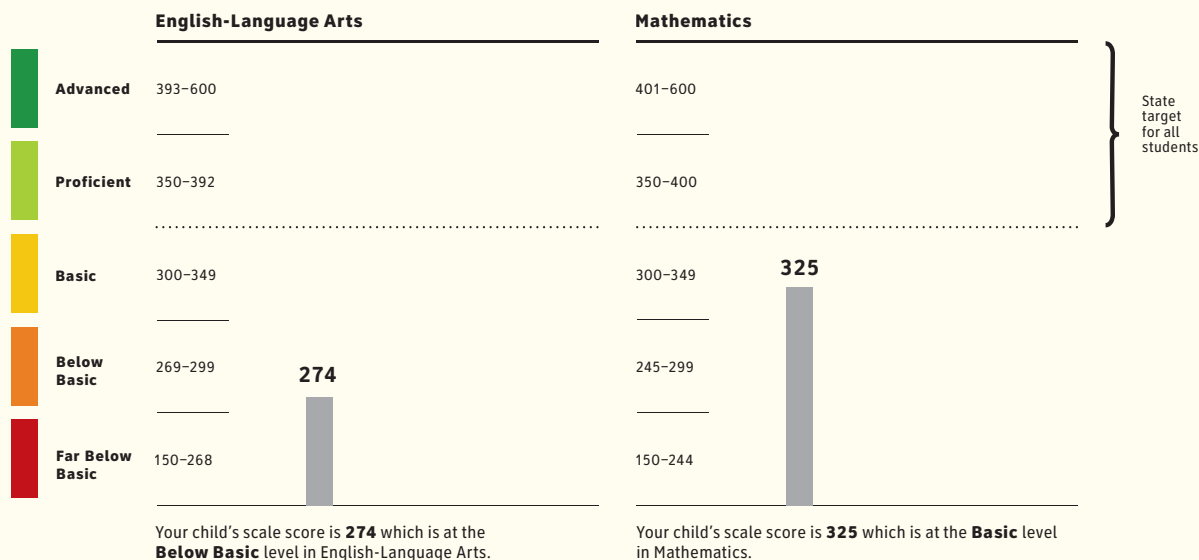
FOR THE PARENT/GUARDIAN OF:
BIANCA SMITH
123 Main Street
Los Angeles, CA 90210



SCHOOL: **JOHNSON ELEMENTARY**
DISTRICT: **LANGEBERG UNIFIED**

Your child's overall results on the California Standards Tests

Your child's scores and performance levels



Find complete STAR results at <http://star.cde.ca.gov> and your school's Accountability Report Card (SARC) at www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/sa or ask for a copy of the SARC at your child's school

How should I use these STAR Program results?

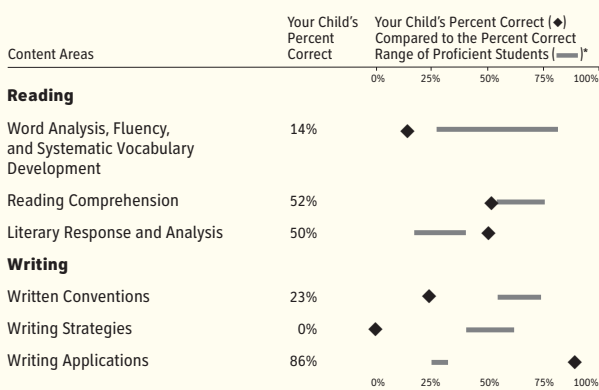
These results are one of several tools used to follow your child's educational progress. While they provide an important measure, they should be viewed with other available information about your child's achievement, such as classroom tests, assignments, and grades.

These results are also intended to help ensure your child is getting the best possible education. If your child is not performing at the level you would like, these results can help guide a conversation with your child's teacher in order to help focus on specific areas for improvement.

Sample STAR Student Report for the CSTs (continued)

Your child's strengths and needs based on these tests

English-Language Arts GRADE 4



More about the English-Language Arts Standards

Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development:

Students understand the basic features of reading. They select letter patterns and know how to translate them into spoken language by using phonics, syllabication, and word parts. They apply this knowledge to achieve fluent oral and silent reading.

Reading Comprehension: Students read and understand grade-level-appropriate material. They draw upon a variety of comprehension strategies as needed...

Literary Response and Analysis: Students read and respond to a wide variety of significant works of children's literature. They distinguish between the structural features of the text and the literary terms or elements...

Written Conventions: Students write and speak with a command of standard English conventions appropriate to this grade level.

Writing Strategies: Students write clear, coherent sentences and paragraphs that develop a central idea. Their writing shows they consider the audience and purpose. Students progress through the stages of the writing process...

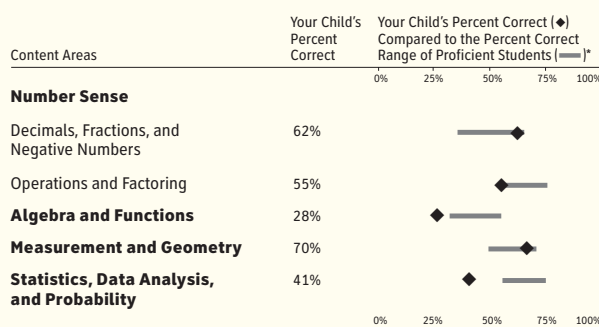
Writing Applications: Students write compositions that describe and explain familiar objects, events, and experiences.

A NOTE ON USING THIS INFORMATION

A single test can provide only limited information. A student taking the same test more than once might score higher or lower in each tested area within a small range. You should confirm your child's strengths and needs in these topics by reviewing classroom work, standards-based assessments, and your child's progress reports during the year.

Find released test items at www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp and a complete copy of the standards at www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss.

Mathematics GRADE 4



More about the Mathematics Standards

Number Sense: Students understand the place value of whole numbers and decimals to two decimal places and how whole numbers and decimals relate to simple fractions. Students use the concepts of negative numbers. Students extend their use and understanding of whole numbers to the addition and subtraction of simple decimals. Students solve problems involving addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of whole numbers and understand the relationships among the operations. Students know how to factor small whole numbers.

Algebra and Functions: Students use and interpret variables, mathematical symbols, and properties to write and simplify expressions and sentences. Students know how to manipulate equations.

Measurement and Geometry: Students understand perimeter and area...use two-dimensional coordinate grids to represent points and graph lines and simple figures...demonstrate an understanding of plane and solid geometric objects and use this knowledge to show relationships and solve problems.

Statistics, Data Analysis, and Probability: Students organize, represent, and interpret numerical and categorical data and clearly communicate their findings. Students make predictions for simple probability situations.

California Reading List

Your child's recommended California Reading List Number is 3.

This recommended reading list number is based on your child's California English-Language Arts Standards Test score. Your child should be able to read titles within the list independently. Of course, no single test will tell you what books your child can or should read—encourage your child to explore other reading list numbers to find books of interest.

To access the California Reading List:

- Visit <http://star.cde.ca.gov> and click on *California Reading List*
- Click *Search for a Reading List* to find books for your child

Strong reading skills are critical for success in all school subjects. Encourage your child to read at home.

More about the STAR Program

How can you get your questions about the STAR Program and your child's STAR test results answered?

You should begin with your child's teacher(s). Additional information may be available through the school principal or counselor. Information about the STAR Program, such as sample test questions and statewide tests, also is available on the CDE Web site at www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr.

What's new about the 2005 California STAR Student Report?

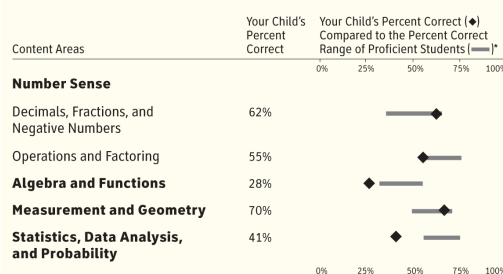
2004 STAR Student Report

Mathematics GRADE 4

CALIFORNIA STANDARDS	YOUR CHILD'S SCORE (◆) COMPARED TO SCORE OF PROFICIENT STUDENTS		
	LOWER	ABOUT THE SAME	HIGHER
Number Sense			
Decimals, Fractions, and Negative Numbers		◆	
Operations and Factoring	◆		
Algebra and Functions		◆	
Measurement and Geometry	◆		
Statistics, Data Analysis, and Probability		◆	

2005 STAR Student Report

Mathematics GRADE 4



The 2005 STAR Student Report features an improved data table that shows your student's performance in each content area in English-language arts, mathematics, science, and history-social science.

The new data table has three parts:

- 1 Your student's percent correct in each content area.
- 2 A diamond that visually represents your student's percent correct in each content area.
- 3 A bar that shows the range of percent correct scores in each content area for students statewide who scored proficient on the English-language arts, mathematics, science, or history-social science test.

Why the change?

Statistics, Data Analysis, and Probability

41%



The report has changed to provide more information about the student's scores. In the example above, a student got 41% of all questions about Statistics, Data Analysis, and Probability correct, but students statewide who scored proficient on the California Mathematics Standards Test got between 51% and 75% of all questions correct for this content area. This year's report shows you how your student performed compared to students who scored proficient on the total test.

What does it mean?

If the table looks like this...

...it means:



Your child performed **lower than** those students who achieved a score of proficient on the total test.



Your child performed **in the same range** as those students who achieved a score of proficient on the total test.



Your child performed **higher than** those students who achieved a score of proficient on the total test.

Although these scores provide an important piece of information about your child's performance, they should be used with other information about your child's achievement, such as classroom tests, assignments, and grades.



THE GUIDE TO YOUR STAR STUDENT REPORT

THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

This guide helps you follow your child's report and the recommendations that are provided. Some sections of your child's report are translated word for word and other sections are translated more generally.

1 Introductory Letter

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Each year, California's STAR Program measures your child's progress in meeting California's Content Standards, which describe what all students should know and be able to do at each grade level.

This report shows your child's scores on the California Standards Tests, and if your child is taking a Grade 3 or 7 test, scores on the California Achievement Tests, Sixth Edition Survey (CAT/6 Survey).

2 Your child's information

Here you find: your child's student number, date of birth, grade, test date, school, and district. If available, your mailing address also appears.

3 Your child's scores and performance levels

See how your child did on the California Standards Tests by looking at the vertical black bars below each subject heading. The number at the top of each bar is your child's exact score on the test. The colored boxes to the left and the text at the bottom of each black bar provide your child's performance level in each subject. There are five performance levels: Advanced, Proficient, Basic, Below Basic, and Far Below Basic.

English-Language Arts and Mathematics are tested for most students in Grades 2–11. History–Social Science is tested for all students in Grades 8, 10, and 11. Science is tested for all students in Grade 5 and for some students in Grades 9, 10, and 11. Scores are provided for all of the tests your child took. If your child did not take one or more of these tests or if a score was not to be reported, this is noted.

If your child was tested under special circumstances, then the following appears: "Your Child Was Tested Below Grade Level."

- 4 You can use these web addresses to find complete STAR results (<http://star.cde.ca.gov>) and your school's Accountability Report Card (www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/sa). You can also request a copy of the School Accountability Report Card (SARC) at your child's school.

5 How should I use these STAR Program results?

This section suggests other ways to monitor your child's educational progress, including through classroom tests, assignments, and grades. You can use these sources of information to talk with your child's teacher about specific areas of improvement.

The STAR Student Report
USING ASSESSMENT TO HELP STUDENTS LEARN

Dear Parent/Guardian,
Each year, California's Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program measures your child's progress in meeting California's content standards, which describe what all students should know and be able to do at each grade level. This report shows your child's score on the California Standards Tests and, if your child is taking a grade 3 or 7 test, scores on the California Achievement Tests, Sixth Edition Survey (CAT/6 Survey).

Sincerely,
Jill O'Connell
State Superintendent of Education

STUDENT #: 0000032205 DATE OF BIRTH: 5/12/93
GRADE: 4 TEST DATE: Spring 2005

NAME (last, first, middle): BIANCA SMITH
123 Main Street
Los Angeles, CA 90020

SCHOOL: JOHNSON ELEMENTARY
DISTRICT: LONGBEACH UNIFIED

Your child's overall results on the California Standards Tests

Your child's scores and performance levels

English-Language Arts
Your child's score is 274 which is at the **Below Basic** level in English Language Arts.

Mathematics
Your child's score is 325 which is at the **Basic** level in Mathematics.

How should I use these STAR Program results?

1. These results are one of several tools used to follow your child's educational progress. While they provide an important measure, they should be viewed with other available information about your child's achievement, such as classroom tests, assignments, and grades.

2. These results are also intended to help ensure your child is getting the best possible education. If your child is not performing at the level you would like, these results can help guide a conversation with your child's teacher in order to help focus on specific areas for improvement.

6 Your child's strengths and needs based on these tests

These charts show how your child did in the different content areas for each test taken. The subject for each test is listed at the top of each chart. Most reports for students in Grades 2–11 include English-Language Arts and Mathematics. Reports for students in Grades 5, 9, 10, and 11 include Science. Reports for students in Grades 8, 10, 11 include History–Social Science.

The items on the California Standards Test (CST) are grouped into the content areas on the left of each chart. These content areas are based on the California Content Standards, which describe what your child should know and be able to do at each grade level. (If your child did not take any of the tests expected for his/her grade level or if a score was unavailable to be reported, this is noted.)

The diamonds on the chart show the percentage of questions your child answered correctly for each content area. The bar shows the range of scores for students who scored proficient on the test.

Below the chart is additional information about your child's performance on each test.

7 This section contains one of the following:

- Reports for students in Grades 2–4, 6, and 7 include more information about the English-Language Arts Standards and the Mathematics Standards.
- Reports for students in Grades 5, 8, and 9 include three subject areas plus a section of additional resources.
 - Grades 5 and 9 include English-Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science.
 - Grade 8 includes English-Language Arts, Mathematics, and History–Social Science.
- Reports for students in Grades 10 and 11 include score information about both the History–Social Science and Science tests.

8 A note on using this information

A single exam can provide only limited information. A student taking the same test more than once might score higher or lower in each tested area within a small range. You should confirm your child's strengths and needs in these topics by reviewing classroom work, standards-based assessments, and progress reports during the year.

9 California Reading List

This recommended reading list number is based on your child's California English-Language Arts Standards Test score. Your child should be able to read titles within the list independently. Of course, no single test will tell you what books your child can or should read—encourage your child to explore other reading list numbers to find books of interest.

To access the California Reading List:

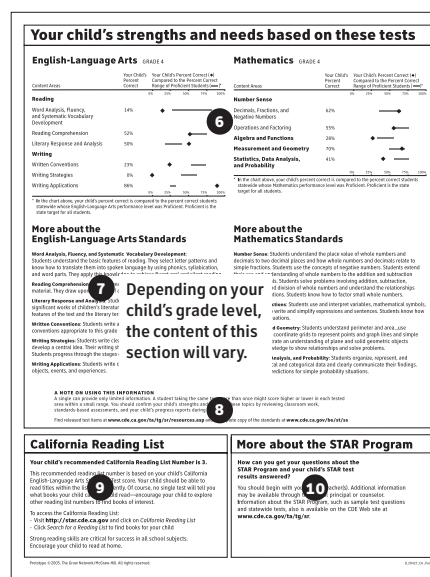
- Visit <http://star.cde.ca.gov> and click on *California Reading List*
- Click *Search for a Reading List* to find books for your child

Strong reading skills are critical for success in all school subjects. Encourage your child to read at home.

10 National comparison (for Grades 3 and 7) or More about the STAR Program (for other grades)

If your child is in Grade 3 or Grade 7, this box compares your child's scores on the CAT/6 Survey with the scores of a sample of students in the same grade tested throughout the United States. Your child's score represents the percentage of students in the national sample who scored at the same level or lower than your child (e.g. a score of 50 means that your child scored as well as or better than half of the students in the national sample).

If your child is not in Grade 3 or Grade 7, this section provides information about how you can get answers to your questions about the STAR Program and your child's STAR test results.



Sample Home Report for the SABE/2

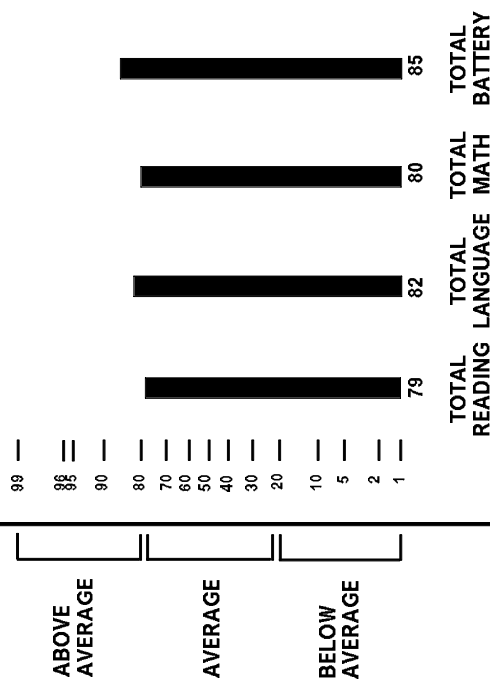
READING VOCABULARY: COMPREHENSION: STRENGTHS: SAME MEANING UNFAMILIAR WORDS IN CONTEXT GENERALIZATIONS FURTHER HELP MAY BE NEEDED: MULTIMEANING WORDS	PERCENTILE 73 79
LANGUAGE MECHANICS: EXPRESSION: STRENGTHS: SENTENCE FORMATION NOUN, PRONOUN SENTENCE, PHRASE, CLAUSE FURTHER HELP MAY BE NEEDED: EDITING SKILLS SENTENCE COMBINING WRITING CONVENTIONS	PERCENTILE 81 76
MATH COMPUTATION: CONCEPTS & APPLICATIONS: FURTHER HELP MAY BE NEEDED: SUBTRACT WHOLE NUMBERS NUMERATION PROBLEM SOLVING NUMBER SENTENCES DIVIDE WHOLE NUMBERS NUMBER THEORY	PERCENTILE 62 88
OTHER CONTENT AREAS SPELLING: STUDY SKILLS:	PERCENTILE 55 91

11/10/04



OVERALL PERFORMANCE

THESE REFERENCE PERCENTILE SCORES SHOW THE PERCENT OF STUDENTS IN THE NORM GROUP WHO SCORED LOWER THAN YOUR CHILD.



Reference scores may not be valid for the subtest(s) where the student was given test accommodations.

HOME REPORT

PCTRIG STUDENT0285
 GRADE: 4.4 CLASS: TEACHER008VWXYZ

Your child took the Spanish Assessment of Basic Education/2nd edition during the Spring as part of your school's achievement testing program. The test results give you information about his achievement at that time.

How your child performed in comparison to Spanish-Speaking students nationally in reading, language, and math, is shown on the graph at the center of the page. The charts on the right of the page give more detailed information about his scores in these and other content areas.

BIRTH DATE: 4/1/84
 FORM/LEVEL: 4
 NORMS: SABE/2 SPRING
 TEST DATE: SPRING 2005
 SCORING: TRADITIONAL
 QUARTER MONTH: 31
 DISTRICT: ANYTOWNVWXYZ
 SCHOOL: SCHOOL005(1-6)Z

CITY: ANYTOWNVWXYZ
 STATE: US

Explanation for the Student Home Report (SABE/2)

The Home Report for the *Spanish Assessment of Basic Education, Second Edition, (SABE/2)* provides your student's test results for each subject area tested. This explanation can be used to help you better understand the report.

- The bar graph in the middle of this report shows your student's overall performance as a reference group percentile rank (RPR) for each subject area tested—reading, language, and mathematics. The RPR compares your student's results with a sample of scores of other Spanish-speaking students at the same grade level nationwide. The RPR ranges from 1 to 99. An RPR of 50 means that the student scored as well as or better than 50 percent of the students in the sample. The overall score combines the scores for all areas tested.
- The left side of the graph shows three performance levels—below average, average, and above average. Your student's score for each subject area tested will place him or her within one of these performance levels. If your student scored below average, you should meet with your student's teacher(s) to ask about additional resources the school can provide to help him or her achieve better in that subject.
- On the far right of the report, the boxes provide results for the subtests or categories in the major subject areas tested. Reading is divided into vocabulary and comprehension; language into mechanics and expression; mathematics into computation, concepts, and applications; and other content areas into spelling and study skills. The number shown by each category listed is the percentile score for your student in that category.
- These boxes also may contain general suggestions for helping your student improve his or her achievement in a particular category. Ask your student's teacher(s) for more specific suggestions to use in helping your student improve.